



Communiqué

de l'Ambassade des Etats-Unis

de presse

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On Monday, December 1, World AIDS Day 2008, we join the people of Madagascar in celebrating life. For more than 25 years, the world community has witnessed the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS. Until recently, many wondered whether prevention, treatment and care could ever successfully be provided in resource-limited settings where HIV was a death sentence. On World AIDS Day 2008, we celebrate life. In countless communities around the world, through partnerships with the American people, courageous individuals in nations devastated by HIV/AIDS are choosing life, saving the lives of their fellow countrymen and women, and creating hope for a future free of HIV/AIDS.

In 2003, U.S. President George W. Bush launched the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) to combat global HIV/AIDS – the largest commitment by any nation to combat a single disease in history. Through PEPFAR, the U.S. Government has already provided \$18.8 billion in HIV/AIDS funding, and the U.S. Congress has authorized up to \$48 billion for HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria over the next five years. The United States is the largest contributor to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund.) To date, the U.S. has contributed more than \$3.3 billion to the Global Fund, representing approximately 30% of total contributions to the fund. To date, Madagascar has received \$32 million from the Global Fund. America has followed through on its commitment by leading the world in its level of support for HIV/AIDS relief.

At the White House Summit on International Development on October 21, 2008, President Bush said: "During times of economic crisis, some may be tempted to turn inward -- focusing on our problems here at home, while ignoring our interests around the world. This would be a serious mistake. America is committed -- and America must stay committed -- to international development for reasons that remain true regardless of the ebb and flow of the markets."

In addition to the security and economic benefits of our commitment to development, it reflects the compassion of the American people and a timeless truth: to whom much is given, much is required. PEPFAR is one aspect of the new era of development led by President Bush in recent years, with a focus on partnership: support for country-owned strategies and national programs, with shared accountability for results, achieved through the power of multi-sectoral partnerships with governments, non-governmental, faith- and community-based organizations, the private sector, and groups of people living with HIV/AIDS.

The U.S. Mission to Madagascar receives approximately \$2 million annually to support HIV/AIDS programs implemented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. Peace Corps. This funding assists with training for health care workers, peer-education programs, diagnoses and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, and mass media campaigns, including the "Red Card" initiative which reached over 1.2 million Malagasy girls aged 10-14 years. This initiative, aims at empowering adolescent girls to say "no" to risky sexual situations. In addition, all of the 140 Peace Corps Volunteers in Madagascar, regardless of their primary focus, play a role in combating HIV/AIDS. The volunteers also work in community health centers and organize an annual bicycle race in Tamatave aimed at raising awareness of HIV/AIDS in Madagascar. The Mission's Defense Attaché Office (DAO) has also contributed in excess of \$250,000 to provide assistance to the Malagasy military through the construction of HIV Clinics, testing, and medical supplies.

HIV prevalence in Madagascar remains under 1% in the general population. Therefore, the focus should continue to be on prevention of infection. The U.S. Mission is working closely with the Comité National de la Lutte Contre le Sida, the Malagasy Ministries of Health and Family Planning, Youth and Sports, and Education, while complementing funding from the Global Fund and other donors to undertake a number of activities to assist the public and private sectors.

Signed by

U.S. Ambassador R. Niels Marquardt